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HIJACK - TURNER
WASHINGTON

A Former CIA Director Stansfield Turner said Wednesday the United States may not have enough evidence to retaliate against Libya for its involvement in the hijacking of an EgyptAir jet.

Turner also acknowledged that he contemplated taking action against Libya's leader Moammar Khadady when he was President Carter's intelligence chief.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has blamed Libya for the weekend hijacking that cost the lives of 59 people. Egyptian commandos shot the hijackers in a bloody rescue Sunday at an air field on the Mediterranean island nation of Malta.

President Reagan has said the United States would strike out at terrorists if they can be clearly linked to an attack or hijacking.

Turner, interviewed on the "CBS Morning News," was asked if a "smoking pistol" was necessary for a retaliatory raid.

"Yes, I think you do, because of our moral and ethical attitude," Turner said. "If we're going to retaliate against Khadafy, and I hope we can some day because he certainly deserves it, you've got to have really strong evidence.

"It's my experience in this kind of thing that you very, very seldom have that with respect to nations supporting small, splinter terrorist groups like this. (And) If you have the evidence, you may not be able to produce it in public. You may not be able to turn it loose because your intelligence sources will be compromised."

Turner, a paid consultant for the network, said when he was CIA director, he looked for a chance to mount a covert operation against Khadafy but failed to find one.

"I would advocate (such operations) if they could be successful," Turner said. "I explored that considerably in my time in the CIA and never found the opportunity for it being successful."

Turner said he does not think "the situation is ripe" to attempt to depose Khadafy. "Although there are certainly people opposed to Khadafy ... I don't believe there is enough activity in Libya against Khadafy on which you can build. His strength is a little too strong."

The former CIA director recommended the United States lead a campaign to establish an international airport inspection agency that would inspect security, particularly at international airports in Egypt and Greece, and place armed passengers aboard flights to deal with hijackers.